

# WHAT DOES THE ES ENROLLMENT CRISIS MEAN?

April 26, 1978

## BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF ES!

TODAY WE FACE THE WORST CRISIS IN ES HISTORY! The attached enrollment figures show that our student army and FIRST LINE OF DEFENCE is deserting in droves. Meanwhile, we debate position counts, tenure and salaries for generals and top brass!

This puts matters bluntly. But we've got to face the truth! Actually, matters may be even worse. As enrollment continues to drop, it will decline faster due to fewer students to get the word around about ES. Also, smaller courses will drop out sooner which will hasten the decline.

THE FIGURES SHOW THAT, IF THE DROP CONTINUES AS IT HAS FOR THE PAST FIVE YEARS, WE MAY BE OUT BY AS EARLY AS NEXT YEAR'S FALL SEMESTER!

UH policy says that courses falling below 10 students cannot be repeated. Our enrollment for the 10 applicable ES courses must total a minimum of 100 students. The graph shows that, unless we reverse the 5-year trend, we will drop to a total of 23 students by the Fall of 1980! We MAY have only FOUR SEMESTERS LEFT! HOW MORE SERIOUS COULD OUR SITUATION BE?!

In the present crisis, the staff core is talking about renaming themselves the "faculty core." They plan to upgrade the program in the next few years by new PhD administrator/faculty imports, they say, who will so raise the quality of teaching and research that enrollment will somehow rise. How do we know this will work? Is this the main problem? Ever take a boring course from a PhD? How long would it take a PhD import to learn about Hawaii's long working class history?

Some say we can attract new students by giving all "A's." Others debate left versus

right sectarianism. A few are circulating rumors about individuals. Some pin vague hopes that a miracle will bring new students into the program. Are these the main problems?

Sure, we're all for raising the quality of our teaching and work. But how do this in the present crisis? What ARE the priorities? Should we attempt to improve the quality from the top down, as the core staff proposes, or raise the program from the base up as the ES Secondary Objectives could do immediately?

MEANWHILE, what are Ashton and the reactionary UH administration core doing? THEY ARE WATCHING THESE SAME ENROLLMENT FIGURES! Ashton wrote in 1976 about ES: "Student interest is declining." The following semester saw our worst drop since ES began. What does all this mean?

The UH core has two ways to kill ES now. One is to attack us head on. This would provoke our counterblow and publicly embarrass Matsuda and Gov. Ariyoshi on the important Hawaiian heritage question in this critical election campaign.

The alternative is to let ES die of its own accord. If they see the program dying, will they rush over to give us a new director with instant tenure, tenured faculty, increased position counts (FTE's) and a new lease on life? Obviously not. Why would they feed something they have been trying so hard to destroy? (Moreover, would Dr. Odo even accept the directorship if he knew the truth about our enrollment?)

So what is the UH core strategy? It is a war of attrition, a paper war, one that already has us bogged down in bureaucratic red tape, talk, talk, talk, and mountains of letters back and forth, core to core. While we get sucked into this UH core strategy, OUR STUDENT ARMY IS DISAPPEARING AT A RATE OF OVER 100 PER YEAR!

Preoccupied with this paper war of attrition, ES staff hasn't called for a single student/community mobilization in the entire 1977-78 school year!

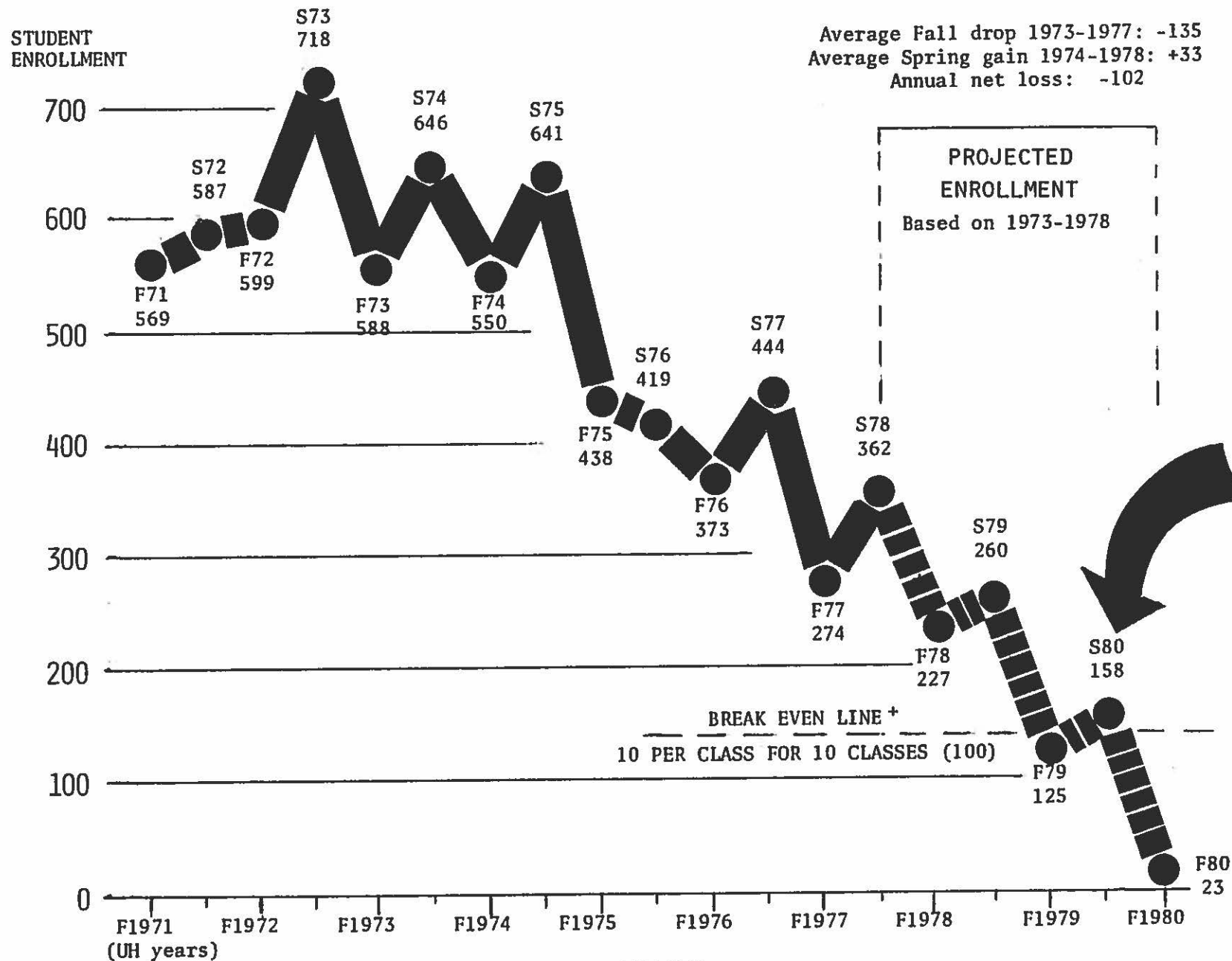
So what is the relation of forces now? UH core is strong in attrition war & red tape, weak in student/community combat. We are strong in student/community forces, weak in red tape and attrition war. Obviously, time & attrition go together, so time is on their side especially in view of the critical enrollment decline!

Last month, we urgently proposed actions on the enrollment crisis. Very little response from the staff core. We suggested ES teams with info kits which we offered to print aimed at college bound hi-school students. No need, said a core member. We proposed an emergency committee be formed to analyze the drop, scientifically pinpoint the real reasons including polling A&S students, and propose actions to the program on what to do. No response. The point was ignored for new volleys in the paper war (see April 10 director's memo).

We pointed out that ES 397 was the only course dropped by the UH core from the S78 schedule (probably because of its Marxist economics). A challenging leaflet we put out attracted 15 hi-quality students. This made 397 the fastest growing of the five ES courses with increased enrollment this semester and proved that timely focussed action can get results. No staff response. Instead, core staff proposed cutting back 397 (and 340) to alternate semesters and chopping its lab leader!

What's happening in ES, people? Why so little response to the most urgent survival crisis we've faced? With a disappearing army, how can we mount any effective struggle in the future? Our present preoccupation with professionalism, credentialing, tenure and all the goodies for top brass and ignoring the immediate needs of students and lab leaders **CAN HELP THE UH CORE KILL THE PROGRAM!**

**RIGHT OR WRONG IN THE PAST, EVERY ONE OF US MUST FACE UP TO THIS OVERPOWERING REALITY AND UNITE IN CORRECTIVE ACTION TO SAVE THE PROGRAM. OTHERWISE, ALOHA ES-- STUDENTS, LAB LEADERS, BRASS AND ALL!**



**THE ETHNIC STUDIES  
ENROLLMENT CRISIS  
1971-1978**

WITH PROJECTIONS UNLESS CORRECTIVE ACTION TAKEN

**PROBABLE CONTRIBUTING CAUSES**

**A) OBJECTIVE CONDITIONS  
BEYOND OUR CONTROL**

- 1) UNEMPLOYMENT & JOB FOCUS COURSES
- 2) INFLATION COSTS
- 3) UH FEE HIKE
- 4) UH ENROLLMENT CUTBACK
- 5) LOWER CAMPUS POST-WAR MILITANCY
- 6) CORE COURSES\*
- 7) DEGREE OPTIONS\*
- 8) OTHER

**POSSIBLE PHASE-OUT  
OF E.S. SPRING 1980  
—IN 4 SEMESTERS!**

**B) CONDITIONS WE CAN ACT UPON**

- 1) CAMPUS AWARENESS OF ES
- 2) COLLEGE BOUND HI-SCHOOL STUDENTS
- 3) WORD-OF-MOUTH STUDENT REACTIONS
- 4) QUALITY OF CLASSES & TEACHING
- 5) GRADING POLICY
- 6) CORE COURSES & DEGREE OPTIONS\*
- 7) FORCE ACTION BY EXPOSING STATE "BUDGET CRUNCH" & GIVEAWAYS

\*Indicates factors involving both UH administration and ES actions.

+ NOTE: The break-even line is shown somewhat higher than the 100 coordinate as an approximate correction for the fact that the smaller classes would have been phased out one or two semesters earlier.